

AMENDMENT

In the Claims:

Kindly amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) adding ~~an~~ a urethane-based associative thickener to water;
- b) dispersing said urethane-based associative thickener in said water by mixing until a uniform solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener is formed;
- c) adding a oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate to said solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener; and
- d) mixing said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate together with said solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener until a uniform emulsion is formed.

2. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 1.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 1, wherein said urethane-based associative thickener is nonionic.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 1, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is ~~comprised of an alkaline earth metal~~ selected from the group consisting of Calcium Sulfonate, Magnesium Sulfonate, Sodium Sulfonate and Barium Sulfonate ~~compounded with a sulfonate which said sulfonate may be either alkaline or neutral.~~

5. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 1, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is mixed with at least one additive selected from the group consisting of oils, waxes, microcrystalline waxes, petrolatums, tall oil fatty acids, calcium salts of oxidized petrolatums, nonionic surfactants, and mixtures of a linear alcohol and a hydrocarbon.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 1, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is mixed with crystalline calcium carbonate.

7. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 3.

8. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 4.

9. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 5.

10. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 6.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound, said method comprising the steps of:

- a) adding an a urethane-based associative thickener to water;
- b) dispersing said urethane-based associative thickener in said water by mixing until a uniform solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener is formed;
- c) mixing a oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate with at least one additive selected from the group consisting of oils, waxes, microcrystalline waxes, petrolatums, tall oil fatty acids, calcium salts of oxidized petrolatums, nonionic surfactants, and mixtures of a linear alcohol and a hydrocarbon;
- d) adding said mixture of said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate and said at least one additive to said solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener; and
- e) mixing said mixture of said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate and said at least one additive with said solution of said water and said urethane-based associative thickener until a uniform emulsion is formed.

12. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 11.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 11, wherein said urethane-based associative thickener is nonionic.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 11, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is ~~comprised of an alkaline earth metal~~ selected from the group consisting of Calcium Sulfonate, Magnesium Sulfonate, Sodium Sulfonate and Barium Sulfonate ~~compounded with a sulfonate which said sulfonate may be either alkaline or neutral.~~

15. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 11, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is mixed with at least one additive selected from the group consisting of oils, waxes, microcrystalline waxes, petrolatums, tall oil fatty acids, calcium salts of oxidized petrolatums, nonionic surfactants, and mixtures of a linear alcohol and a hydrocarbon.

16. (Currently Amended) The method of forming an amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound of claim 11, wherein said oil-based alkaline earth metal sulfonate is mixed with crystalline calcium carbonate.
17. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 13.
18. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 14.
19. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 15.
20. (Previously Presented) An amine-free emulsion of an alkaline earth metal sulfonate compound prepared in accordance with the method of claim 16.